



Date and Time: Friday, May 12, 2023 12:43:00PM PDT

Job Number: 197006625

Document (1)

1. [*Rex Murphy: What's in a name? With 'Climate Change,' a lot of reckless misuse*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "doom" and ("climate" or "eco")

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Sources: National Post (f/k/a The Financial Post)(Canada);
All Content Types: News; Timeline: Jan 01, 2018 to May 11,
2023; Geography by Document: North America; Geography
by Document: Canada

Rex Murphy: What's in a name? With 'Climate Change,' a lot of reckless misuse

National Post (f/k/a The Financial Post) (Canada)

November 16, 2018 Friday

Web Edition

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Section: FULL COMMENT

Length: 1152 words

Body

One of the more distinguishing aspects of the global warming frenzy is the playful manner in which its adherents approach language. Whenever they feel the need to rearrange the terms of debate, counter the emergence of "inconvenient" facts, or simply put a whole new banner on the crusade, neither shame nor consistency offers any brake to their innovations.

Should the world, the weather, their most central projections "present" in any manner that doesn't accord with their most pious predispositions, then they simply rename the whole thing. In the beginning it was always the fight against Global Warming - capital G, capital W.

But Global Warming proved an unaccommodating brand. When snow in all its abundant white purity continued to fall where snow was no longer meant to fall, when glaciers failed to move and melt at the speeds Global Warming had promised they would, when temperatures dropped to chilling Antarctic levels in places where Global Warming prophets had projected the growth of palm trees, even the sages of the IPCC realized it was time to change the window display, and put a new face on the failing campaign.

Hence the birth of **Climate** Change, a term so generously elastic and gorgeously tautological that it could fit all occasions, even to the contradiction of the principles of the "science" it was purported to designate. Cold, hot, moist or dry - there was no condition that could not be stuffed under **Climate** Change, no random spurt of headline-making weather, local storm or global current that could not be folded neatly under its wonderfully wide-winged umbrella.

The press were lenient with the change. They did not seem to wish to point out the obvious - that the radical renaming of the "greatest threat to the planet" might spell or at least hint that there may have been something wrong with the central presumptions of the whole scheme. After all, you do not see the great litany of sciences that are sciences, call up the PR machines and the communications teams to rename their disciplines. Physics is still physics, botany is botany, astronomers still study the heavens, and biologists still stay with their original matter.

Snoopy joins young skaters on a rink at Somerset House in London, England, on Nov. 12, 2018.

But of course the rules are different for an activist science, and if a rebrand will help the cause, who really cares about rigour in the discipline? Then, too, **Climate** Change had one extra insuperable advantage. Since its opposite - which would be **Climate** Fixity, **climate** that never varies, never alters, static **climate** - is a condition unknown in nature and never likely to occur, then **Climate** Change is merely a phrase that describes all weather as it has always been and always will be. It always "fits" and it "fits" everything. And a term that fits everything and always does, contains absolutely no information whatsoever. It is an empty term, a hollow phrase, a perfect redundancy. **Climate** is change.

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I'm going to skip **Climate** Weirding and **Climate** Wilding, which for a time the Magi of the environmental hardliners placed in contention to supplant **Climate** Change, since these trial terms proved too weird and too wild even for the brandmasters of imminent global **doom**.

Now to more current matters. Since its first hours in power, the Trudeau administration has been obsessed with the idea that it is a world champion in the holy combat against Global Warming. In their rosy minds, the nations of our troubled planet are looking to Ottawa, and in particular to the Liberal benches of the House of Commons, as lambs look to their stout shepherd when the wolves descend. It is a curious fixation and could even be seen as harmless, were it not for the havoc it has wrought to one of the country's principal industries, the black farce of the same administration's pipeline non-management, and the furious political winds it has stirred in Alberta and British Columbia.

Here, too, the wild dance with language prevails. This is the first government in the history of the world that has declared war on one of the constituents of the atmosphere - carbon dioxide. I guess nitrogen and oxygen were just lucky to escape the fatwa, but who knows, perhaps their day is coming. Maybe the government will get even more expansive and take on the table of elements. Down with Deuterium.

Snow and sleet from Winter Storm Avery cover the ground at the White House in Washington, D.C., on Nov. 15, 2018.

But with carbon dioxide being the life-supporting substance it is, they knew that when they decided to put a tax on it, calling it by its proper name - i.e., a carbon-dioxide tax - wouldn't do. So they call it instead a "carbon" tax, which of course it is not and could not be. But carbon sounds darker; it reminds one of soot and smog and gruesome things; not flowers and bees and birds and trees, all of which in their way owe something, as do we humans, to good old CO₂.

Carbon dioxide is not a pollutant, and they know this. But nevertheless you may hear Justin Trudeau and Catherine McKenna any day of the week warble on about taxing the "big polluters" and putting a tax on "pollution," and going on rapturously about the benefits of a "carbon tax," when none of these terms apply at all.

An anti-global warming protester holds up a placard in Cleveland, Ohio, near the Republican National Convention site on July 18, 2016.

Can it be a good cause, or a true one, that deploys such deliberate and reckless misuse of words and phrases, that revises its fundamental terms at will, mis-designates key concepts, and brazenly twists language to suit the press release of the moment - all practices that are disrespectful of both science and language. What does it say of the global warming activists themselves, their confidence in their own cause, that to make their case outside the circle of true believers, they twist and maul language, reach for the explosive term over the correct one, overstate every threat and manufacture threats where there are none?

Should the day come to update Orwell's classic essay on politics and the English language - and I think it has arrived - the lexical and semantic acrobatics of the global warming hype machine will supply in full abundance all the miserable examples that are required.

Scientists acknowledge critical errors in study of how fast the oceans are warming(
<https://nationalpost.com/news/canada/scientists-acknowledge-key-errors-in-study-of-how-fast-the-oceans-are-warming>)

Rex Murphy: The UN **climate**-change panel that cried wolf too often(<https://nationalpost.com/opinion/rex-murphy-the-un-climate-change-panel-that-cried-wolf-too-often>)

Rex Murphy: The art of politically expedient planning in an age of **climate** ague(
https://nationalpost.com/opinion/rex-murphy-the-art-of-politically-expedient-planning-in-an-age-of-climate-ague?video_autoplay=true) !@COPYRIGHT=© 2018 Postmedia Network Inc. All rights reserved.

Classification

Language: ENGLISH

Publication-Type: Newspaper

Subject: GLOBAL WARMING (92%); **CLIMATE** CHANGE (90%); CLIMATOLOGY (90%); BOTANY (87%); GLACIERS & ICEBERGS (78%); REBRANDING (77%); EDITORIALS & OPINIONS (73%); BRANDING (69%); ASTRONOMY & SPACE (65%); BIOLOGY (65%); distinguishing,aspects,global,warming,frenzy,playful !@PERMALINK= <https://nationalpost.com/opinion/rex-murphy-whats-in-a-name-with-climate-change-a-lot-of-reckless-misuse> (%)

Industry: GLOBAL WARMING (92%); REBRANDING (77%); BRANDING (69%)

Geographic: LONDON, ENGLAND (52%); ENGLAND (52%)

Load-Date: January 27, 2020

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